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## ALL SOULS' CHURCH, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

All Souls' Church for the Deaf is located at 3224 North 16th Street in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The church serves the greater Metropolitan and Philadelphia community extending through the Delaware Valley. The church is a uniquely constructed stone structure designed with a sloping nave especially for Deaf people and their ability to see a signed service. The building itself is in fair condition, seats approximately 200 persons, and consists of the church, chapel, two small meeting rooms and a small apartment for the sexton. The second floor has an auditorium with stage and large kitchen. It is estimated that the replacement value of the church is approximately \$262,000.00 and the insurance carried on this building is \$207,000.00. The rectory, at the time of our Study, was separate from the church but was located next door. However, it is understood that different arrangements were being considered for the housing of the priest.

### THE CHURCH NEIGHBORHOOD

In recent years the church neighborhood has been undergoing a rapid change with many of the older residents moving farther out, accompanied by a large influx of Negroes. The area around the church is made up of apartment dwellings, rooming houses, and single-home dwellings. Several census tracts have been selected as the immediate parish area around All Souls' Church. However, All Souls' Church draws its membership from a very wide geographical area and none of its members lives in what we might normally describe as "the parish area." Within the immediate parish area served

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by the church, there were some interesting population characteristics in 1960: there was a population of 40,921 persons and of this number, 56.1% were non-white. The median education level of adults 25 years of age and over in this area was low. The following chart gives some of the population characteristics of this community area.

CENSUS TRACT	POPULATION		% CHANGE	% 14 & UNDER	% 65 & OVER	% NON-WHITE
	1950	1960				
38-H	16,468	15,552	- 5.6	26.7	9.5	72.9
43-C	6,009	5,582	- 8.0	20.2	17.5	8.2
37-A	NA	2,833		17.0	17.9	6.4
38-I	6,557	5,593	-14.7	29.3	8.4	32.9
G	NA	11,361		27.9	7.5	80.3
TOTAL	40,921					56.1

CENSUS TRACT	NON-WHITE POPULATION		% CHANGE	RESIDENCE 1955 SAME AS 1960 %
	1950	1960		
38-H	4,077	11,342	178.2	43.1
43-C	343	460	34.1	59.2
37-A	NA	171		46.0
38-I	263	1,839	599.2	63.4
G	NA	9,128		51.3
TOTAL	22,950			

ED. OF ADULTS 25 YRS. OF AGE AND OVER							
CENSUS TRACT	H.S. %	GRAD. COLL. 1-3 YRS. COLL.	GRAD. COLL.	OVER 25	MED ED	MED M AGE	F
38-H	21.3	6.0	5.4	9,438	9.9	30.2	33.5
43-C	20.4	5.0	3.1	3,787	9.3	38.2	43.4
37-A	19.4	5.8	7.7	1,960	9.9	37.8	43.6
38-I	17.7	1.3	1.2	3,249	8.8	30.3	31.8
G	21.1	5.4	4.5	6,617	9.9	29.9	30.2



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In 1960 there were 40,921 persons living in this area and by the time of our Study there were 340 members of the Episcopal Church, making up approximately 0.8% of the total population. However, there were no members of All Souls' Church living within this geographically defined parish area. Information on churches and schools serving this parish area may be found in the attached forms.

GENERAL DIVISION OF RESEARCH AND FIELD STUDY  
Episcopal Church Center  
2nd Avenue at 43rd Street  
New York, N.Y.

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Date March 23, 1964

CHURCH SELF-STUDY FORM

I. IDENTIFICATION

Church All Soul's Church for Deaf  
Street 3224 N. 16th Street City Philadelphia  
County Philadelphia Diocese Pennsylvania  
Parish or Mission \_\_\_\_\_ State Pennsylvania  
What geographic area does this church serve? Philadelphia and suburbs  
all Delaware Valley, Penna.

II. THE CHURCH NEIGHBORHOOD

A. The church is located in a section of the city which is occupied by:

Downtown commercial uses \_\_\_\_\_ Industrial uses \_\_\_\_\_ Apartment dwellings x  
Rooming houses x Single-home dwellings x A college \_\_\_\_\_ Military  
uses \_\_\_\_\_ Other institutions \_\_\_\_\_

B. If more than one type is checked above, please clarify:

A few old apartment buildings - number of homes changed into apartments.

C. Is the church neighborhood changing in any way? Describe:

Colored population predominant becoming predominantly Negro.

D. The following schools are located within the church neighborhood:

PUBLIC GRADESCHOOLS

ADDRESS



## CHURCH HISTORY

The first service for the deaf in Philadelphia was at St. Stephen's Church, February 19, 1859, by Rev. Thomas Gallaudet of New York City, and Rev. Dr. Ducachet, Rector. Services every three months, until 1861.

1861 to 1865, services for the deaf were held at Episcopal Academy Chapel, as part of a projected parish of St. John Chrysostom, which was planned to be a combined congregation of deaf and hearing people, on the model of St. Ann's Church in New York City.

1868 to 1885, the Mission to the Deaf was based again at St. Stephen's Church. Services were conducted by the Rev. Dr. Gallaudet and the Rev. Dr. Clerc until 1874, when Mr. Henry Winter Syle became layreader and student for Holy Orders. He was ordained Deacon in 1876 and priest in 1881; the first deaf man to be so honored. In 1872, by action of the rector (Rev. Dr. Rudder) and the Vestry of St. Stephen's Church, the Mission to the Deaf was officially reorganized as a parochial mission, and branched out at Emmanuel Church, Kensington. The Rev. Mr. Syle was an assistant minister at St. Stephen's. In 1885, the Vestry of St. Stephen's dissolved the official connection with the deaf, being unable to pay Rev. Mr. Syle's salary.

1885 to 1887, the deaf worshipped at the Church of the Covenant, until that church ceased being. The deaf bought an old church at Franklin and Green Streets, in 1888, for their exclusive use, and called it "All Souls" from Exekiel 18:3 and 4.

In 1913, All Souls' moved to the present location at 3224-6 N. 16th St., into a new building of their own.



IV. THE LOCAL CONGREGATION

A. Church properties:

1. Describe and give location of all land owned by the congregation, reporting the use of each parcel.

Church and parish house all in one building - small plot of grass  
around three sides of building.

2. Type of church building: Frame      Brick      Stone x Other      (type)

Describe the church building, giving number of sittings; condition of building; and improvements needed, with estimated cost:

Building in fair condition.

Chapel seat - 60 - church 200.

Replacement Value \$ 262,000.00 Amount of insurance carried \$ 207,000.00

3. Type of parish hall or house: Attached x Separated     ;

In basement of the church     ; Frame      Brick     

Stone x Other      (type)

Describe, giving the number of rooms, the condition of the building, and improvements needed, with the estimated cost.

Building is in fair condition -- there is a church and chapel -  
and two small meeting rooms on first floor - plus a small apartment  
for sexton. Second floor has an auditorium with stage and large  
kitchen.

Replacement value \$ 207,000.00 Amount of insurance carried \$ 207,000.00

\*This figure is probably exaggerated. If this church building were put up for sale it most likely would bring in less than half of the above figure.



4. Type of rectory or clergy house: Attached \_\_\_\_\_ Separated   x  ;  
Frame \_\_\_\_\_ Brick   x   Stone \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(type)

Describe, giving the number of rooms, the condition of this building,  
and improvements needed, with estimated cost.

Rectory is in fair condition - nine rooms - four baths

Is it used as a clergy residence?   Yes   If not, what use is made of  
the building?

Replacement value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Insurance carried: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

5. Describe all other buildings owned or used by the congregation, giving  
(a) type of construction; (b) number of rooms; (c) condition;  
(d) improvements needed and estimated cost; (e) replacement value;  
(f) amount of insurance carried; and (g) present use.



## B. Membership (secure from parish records):

1. Number of church families: Total number 30Number of individuals not in families 20

2. Baptized membership                      Communicants                      Church School

<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>Now</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>Now</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>Now</u>
<u>155</u>	<u>148</u>	<u>135</u>	<u>135</u>	<u>122</u>	<u>112</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>12</u>

	<u>5 yrs. ago</u>	<u>4 yrs. ago</u>	<u>3 yrs. ago</u>	<u>2 yrs. ago</u>	<u>Last year</u>
3. Number of baptized members who were removed from the parish list	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>      </u>

Number of baptized members who were added to the parish list	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>      </u>
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## 4. Communicants added:

By confirmation from Episcopal families

<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>      </u>
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By confirmation from other Churches

<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>
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By reception from other Churches

<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>
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By baptism and confirmation from no church

<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>
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Total

<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>      </u>
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## 5. Attendance:

Number of communicants who attended regularly last year 30Number of communicants who attended occasionally 10Number who did not attend last year, but lived in the community 15Number of communicants who did not live in the community, but were on the parish records, not transferred 66. How many persons attended the last annual business meeting? 50



V. WORSHIP

A. List schedule of regular Sunday services, including church school:

TYPE OF SERVICE	HOUR	ATTENDANCE (Adults & Children)*		
		LOW	AVERAGE	HIGH
Holy Communion 1st Sun.	11:00 a.m.	20	32	40
Morning Prayer other Sdys	11:00 a.m.	18	28	35
Church School, Mondays	3:30 p.m.	7	10	12

\*Use figures from Church Service Register

B. Weekday services:

TYPE OF SERVICE	DAY AND HOUR	ATTENDANCE*		
		LOW	AVERAGE	HIGH
Maudy Thursday	8 p.m.	20	30	35

\*Use figures from the Church Service Register

C. Special services or missions held during the average year (including Lent):

D. Number and nature of services in which this congregation participates with other Episcopal congregations. State average attendance from this congregation:

E. What experiments or adjustments have been made in changing the hours or the format of services? Comment on results:

None

F. Additional information about Sunday services:

1. Are birthdays, anniversaries, and the departed regularly remembered? No
2. Is there a coffee or hospitality hour after any service? Yes
3. Is baby care provided during any service? No









4. List the teaching aids used, including audio-visual material.

See K-11

5. Describe the program for pre-school children.

None

6. Data on the teaching staff

a. How are teachers recruited: Priest-in-charge and one child's mother is the teaching staff.

b. Describe the way in which teachers are trained, giving the number of sessions, the leaders, etc.

None

c. How are teachers assisted in the performance of their duties?

d. Summary of teachers' backgrounds

<u>AGE</u>			<u>Number</u>	<u>EDUCATION</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>YEARS</u> <u>TEACHING</u>	<u>Number</u>
19 years or less			_____	Grade school	_____	one	_____
20	to	29	_____	Junior high	_____	two	_____
30	to	39	_____	Senior high	_____	three	_____
				1 to 3 years	_____		
40	to	49	_____	College	_____	four	_____
50 years or more			_____	College grad.	_____	five	_____
				Graduate study	_____	6 to 10	_____
	Male		_____			11 to 20	_____
	Female		_____			20 and over	_____





2. What Retreats, missions, Quiet Days, etc., have the members participated in during the last two years? Estimate the total number of participants.

None

3. What leader- and participant-training programs have been held in the last two years, such as the Indiana Plan, Parish Life Conferences, Missions, and Institutes? Estimate the total number of participants.

None

4. How can the Christian education program of this congregation be strengthened?

VII. LITANY OF ORGANIZATION - Include, where applicable, vestry or bishop's committee, parish council, choirs, guilds, circles, ushers, acolytes (for men as well as boys), college work, etc.

A. For Women

1. Give the total number of adult women in the congregation. 35
2. Give the number of organizations for adult women. 1
3. Give the total active membership of all these organizations. 12

B. For Men

1. Give the total number of adult men in the congregation. 20
2. Give the number of organizations for adult men. 1
3. Give the total membership of all these organizations. 9

C. For Men and Women

1. Give the number of organizations for men and women. 2
2. Give the total active membership of all these organizations.

D. For Girls in:

	<u>grade school</u>	<u>junior high</u>	<u>high school</u>
1. Total number of girls	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>
2. Number of organizations	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>
3. Total active membership	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>

E. For Boys in:

	<u>grade school</u>	<u>junior high</u>	<u>high school</u>
1. Total number of boys	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>
2. Number of organizations	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>
3. Total active membership	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>

F. For Youth in:

	<u>grade school</u>	<u>junior high</u>	<u>high school</u>
1. Number of organizations	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>
2. Total active membership	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>

N.B. Please make a separate report for each individual organization, using the format on the following pages.



IX. CLERGY OR LAY READERS IN CHARGE SINCE 1930

NAME	APPROX. AGE AT START OF MINISTRY HERE	PERIOD OF TENURE	MOVED TO:
Mr. Melvin Ruthven	35	10 years	

A. Does the present minister live in the neighborhood? Yes

Does he give full time to this church? No If not, what other church(es) does he serve, or what other work does he do?

Newark and Trenton, New Jersey - Chester, Pa. and Wilmington, Del.

B. How many people from this parish have gone into full time work for the church within the past ten years, or are now studying for such work? \_\_\_\_\_  
Please give details.

None

C. How many licensed lay readers serve the congregation now? One

Do any lay readers from this congregation serve other congregations? No

If so, which congregations? \_\_\_\_\_

X. FINANCE

A. Income (Last Full Year): (1) Pledges \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Plate offerings \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Parish or mission organizations \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Endowments \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (5) Special fund drives \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (6) Other (please specify) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total receipts \$3,650.98**

B. Disbursements	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	Last Full Year
Total current expenses		\$933.17	\$2,106.20	\$2,106.10	\$2,438.73	\$2,391.10
Diocesan Assessment			38.47	48.64		
Missionary disbursements				229.60	498.85	25.00
Special parish expense				436.50	506.13	522.23
Clergy salary or salaries:						
from congregation	a) _____	_____	_____	4,286.48	_____	_____
	b) _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
from other sources	a) _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	b) _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Rental value of the rectory	\$ 75.00	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Is the church in debt? No Amount of debt \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Method of repayment \_\_\_\_\_



Finance (cont'd)

7. Is a thorough Every Member Canvass conducted each year? No  
If yes, by mail or personal solicitation? \_\_\_\_\_ Describe the  
training of the canvassers. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What other means of fund raising or stewardship education are used?  
?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. If this is a mission or aided parish, what is the potential for self-  
support? This is a mission - No prediction can be made at this time.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Additional comments or information on finances:  
There is a continual struggle to meet current expenses.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

C. Travel:

1. Does the priest have a car? No
2. By whom is the car purchased? Priest \_\_\_\_\_ Congregation \_\_\_\_\_ Diocese \_\_\_\_\_
3. How much is the annual operating expense of the car, omitting depreciation? \$ \_\_\_\_\_ 4. By whom is the operating expense paid? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. How much does the local congregation pay? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Average number of miles traveled per month on church business \_\_\_\_\_

Very little calling is done.  
Priest has four congregations  
to serve.

XI. CHRISTIAN EVANGELISM AND VISITATION

A. Clergy pastoral calling during the past year by rector or vicar:\*

TYPE OF CALL	NUMBER OF CALLS PER WEEK		
	LOW	AVERAGE	HIGH
1. Family or routine parish	_____	_____	_____
2. Sick or emergency	_____	_____	_____
3. Calls for other purposes	_____	_____	_____
4. Time set aside for pastoral calling:			

5. How do the clergy organize their parish calling? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
6. How do the clergy organize their calling on the unchurched and newcomers?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
7. Time spent in pastoral counseling (average hours per week) \_\_\_\_\_
- \* Please give similar information, separately, for other clergy.

B. Lay calling:

1. Describe the Zone or Neighborhood Organization. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
2. Describe the program of lay pastoral visitation, including the number of participants and the time spent.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



3. Describe the program of lay evangelism (including the congregation's approach to newcomers and to the unchurched), giving the number of participants and the amount of time. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. How are newcomers integrated into the life of this congregation?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Describe any religious census of the area made by the congregation itself or with other churches during the last ten years.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

XII. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. What use is made of the press? None

\_\_\_\_\_

- B. What use is made of radio and/or television? None

\_\_\_\_\_

- C. What use is made of the U.S. Mail? Monthly card notices mailed to congregation.

\_\_\_\_\_

- D. Describe the regular publications which are mailed or distributed, including Sunday bulletins, parish newsletters, etc. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- E. How many church road signs are there? \_\_\_\_\_

XIII. NEIGHBORHOOD OR COMMUNITY

A. Is this congregation community-minded? No

B. Describe the clergy participation in community affairs. None

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C. Describe the participation of the congregation in community affairs.

None

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D. Describe the general parish program for the community (including such church-sponsored programs as Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, etc.):

None

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E. List community organizations using the parish hall and its facilities:

None

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F. Describe the way in which the congregation cooperates with other religious bodies:

None

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XIV. PARTICIPATION IN DIOCESAN AND NATIONAL CHURCH PROGRAMS:

A. What offices do the clergy hold in the diocese, missionary district, or National Church? None

B. What offices do the lay people hold in the diocese, missionary district, or National Church? None

C. What diocesan or National Church programs have directly benefited this congregation. Home Department of National Council has a budget now for work among the Deaf. This has indirectly helped All Souls.

D. Describe the men's participation in diocesan programs: None

E. Describe the women's participation in diocesan programs: None

F. Describe youth participation in diocesan programs: None

G. Does this congregation pay its full Missionary Share or Quota? No always

H. What percent of the congregation's budget does for missionary work? \_\_\_\_\_

IV. STAFF

- A. List all paid personnel working for this congregation, giving title, function, and salary, and telling whether full or part-time.

Sexton part-time.

- B. Describe the use of volunteer personnel by this congregation.



XVI. FUTURE POLICY, PROGRAM, AND BUDGET

- A. In adopting a policy for an expanded program for this congregation, in order to vitalize its Christian witness to the community; to extend its outreach of Christian fellowship to all the unchurched; to increase initiative and responsibility for all members of the congregation; to develop local financial resources with a view towards self-support and parochial status (if not already attained); and to further other essential advances, what are the immediate needs as to:

1. Personnel: To train new leadership and secure ordained priest for future  
life of the mission.

2. Buildings:

3. Equipment:

- B. What are the major opportunities that face this congregation?

To begin a centrally located service for the deaf to bring those who  
live in the suburbs into this service.

- C. What are the major problems that face this congregation?

Changing neighborhood - difficulty in transportation and parking getting  
young people interested.

- D. What program needs seem evident on the basis of this Study?.

A complete rebuilding of the congregation.

- E. What would be the approximate capital cost to meet these needs?

F. What would be the annual operating budget to maintain the program?

G. What steps are now being taken locally to meet these needs and opportunities?

An assistant deaf priest has begun to work in this congregation and is trying to interest young deaf people in the church's work.

H. What steps are now being taken by the diocese or district, or might be taken, to assist in meeting these needs and opportunities?

The diocese is paying the assistant priest.

I. Further data or comment on the general needs and problems of this congregation:

The data in this report were furnished by the following committee:

NAME	OCCUPATION	NUMBER OF YEARS IN PARISH
Rev. Gustav C. Meckling		One and one-half years.

Date completed: \_\_\_\_\_

REPORTED MEMBERSHIP FROM MAPS

A total of 95 persons were reported on the membership distribution maps and these members are scattered over a wide section of the Greater Metropolitan community of Philadelphia. As noted earlier in our Study there are no members living within what might normally be described as the parish area. The highest single concentration of members was found in Census Tract 42-E which had some 12 members, followed by a secondary concentration in Census Tract 23-G with 10 members. The following membership distribution is noted:



## MEMBERSHIP DISTRIBUTION TABLE

PARISH PHILADELPHIA

ALL SOULS

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# REPORTED MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCIAL DATA FROM JOURNALS

Our Study of Journal material goes back to the year 1940 and since that time the baptized membership of All Souls' Mission has fluctuated in number, with the year 1950 reporting the highest number of baptized members and the year 1940 the largest number of communicants. Since 1960 there has been a slight loss of baptized members and communicants. Between 1961 and 1963 the baptized membership decreased from 142 to 133, communicant strength decreased from 118 to 105. During this three-year period, some 10 persons were baptized and the ratio of baptisms to the communicant strength was 3.0%. There were five persons presented for confirmation during this three-year period and the ratio of confirmations to the communicant strength was 1.5%. Both of these ratios are below the average for the diocese as a whole and indicate some of the growth difficulties encountered by this church.

Between 1961 and 1963 a total of \$8,992.00 was expended for all purposes, and of this amount \$594.00, or 6.6%, was expended for work outside of the parish.

VITAL STATISTICS

PARISH ALL SOULS'/DEAF

TOWN PHILADELPHIA

COUNTY PHILADELPHIA

DIOCESE PENNSYLVANIA

	1940	1945	1950	1955	1960	1961	1962	1963
Baptized Members	234	194	255	178	148	142	135	133
Communicants	218	186	135	153	122	118	112	105
Church School	25	9	-	-	-	-	-	-
Baptisms	3	2	3	4	7	-	8	2
Percentage of Communicants	1.4	1.1	2.2	2.6	5.7	-	7.1	1.9
Confirmations	5	-	-	8	7	-	4	1
Percentage of Communicants	2.3	-	-	5.2	5.7	-	3.6	9.5
Parochial Expenditures 1	3,497	733	2,145	6,441	2,524	2,124	2391	2363
Special Par. Expenditures 2	225	469	1,619	437	506	532	522	466
Extra-parochial Expenditures 3	112	124	181	230	499	337	25	232
Total Reported Expenditures	3,834	1,326	3,945	7,108	3,529	2,993	2,938	3,061
Expenditures per Communicant	17.59	7.13	29.22	46.46	28.93	25.36	26.23	29.15
Extra-parochial Expenditures per Communicant	0.51	0.67	1.34	1.50	4.09	2.86	0.22	2.21

- 1 Includes clergy salary, current expense, pension premium, and Diocesan assessment.
- 2 Special parish purposes, including capital expenditures.
- 3 Includes Church's Program, special outside.



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# DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## ALL SOULS' MISSION TO THE DEAF, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

All Souls' Church was designed and constructed for the use of deaf persons in 1913. All Souls', like many other congregations, is faced with a changed and changing neighborhood; problems of transportation for a widely scattered membership; and a slow but steady loss of members. On the average Sunday approximately 30 persons are present for services.

The Self-Study, submitted by All Souls' Church, suggests that a major opportunity faced by this church is to secure a more central location with easy access from the suburbs. It is further stated that the congregation needs to be completely rebuilt. The General Division of Research and Field Study concurs with the findings of All Souls' and makes the following suggestions for the mission and the diocesan Department of Missions.

A conference to discuss these recommendations should be assembled. The gathering should include representatives from Deaf Clubs, publications, and organizations not officially connected with the church. It is the contention of many, in our day, that hearing persons and the deaf should no longer be segregated and should have a shared life together in the church. What is the nature of our ministry to the deaf? (a) the historical past; (b) the present situation, (c) where do we go from here?

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There is a real advantage in the deaf attending a regular service with a hearing congregation provided every main service is signed. A singer, in most instances a hearing lay person, should become a definite part of the staff of hearing churches that seek to serve the deaf. Dr. Edward Abernathy, superintendent of the Columbus, Ohio, School for the Deaf, comments that there is a "real advantage in the deaf attending a regular service. However, there is also a danger that the service may go on too rapidly and that it may be difficult for the deaf to follow."

The Rev. Gordon Price, rector of Christ Church, Dayton, Ohio (a large downtown church) reports that all of the services at Christ Church are signed. Since starting these services, about 40 hearing members of the congregation have learned the sign language, and with this type of service they have discovered about 300 deaf people in Dayton, many of whom have availed themselves of the services now that they can follow the entire service. Christ Church has also arranged for a local television newscaster to have news programs and weather forecasts signed beginning in the fall of 1965.

Consideration should be given to a central location. Signed services for the deaf should be given wide publicity in Deaf Publications and the "Church News."

It may be possible, in time, to expand signed services to the northern and western suburban parishes as well as the central city. Meanwhile, hearing clergy on the staff of churches that may be selected for signed services should



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be willing to attend training classes in signing. Hearing interpreters for services should be sought from the Philadelphia Association for the Deaf.

The attached Self-Study report repeatedly suggests the need to relocate the congregation. The diocese should take under advisement the sale of this property and the use of the funds realized. Money from the sale of property should be used at the discretion of the diocese, possibly set aside for use in the general program for the deaf. The vicarage should also be sold and the vicar settled in a place of his choosing in the metropolitan area. The question now is "what do we need in order to do this?"